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Burma Leader Has Change Of Heart, Accepts U.S. Visit

By Thomas B. Ross

Sun-Times Bureau

WASHINGTON—The White House announced Wednesday that Gen. Ne Win, Burma's neutralist and sometimes anti-American strongman, has accepted an invitation to visit President Johnson next fall.

The acceptance represents a minor diplomatic triumph for the United States, which has been striving for several years to break down Ne Win's hostility.

The general, who took over Burma's government in a military coup in 1962, has har-

bored a grudge against the United States because of the activities of the Central Intelligence Agency in his country in the 1950s.

Accuses CIA

At that time, while serving as army chief of staff, Ne Win repeatedly accused the CIA of supporting a band of 12,000 Chinese Nationalist rebels who fled into Burma when the Communists assumed control of China.

After moving into power, Ne Win turned Burma away from generally friendly relations with the United States to a policy of neutrality, slightly oriented toward his big Com-

munist neighbor to the north—Red China.

A \$110,000,000 U.S. aid program was terminated by Burma and \$84,000,000 in Red Chinese aid was accepted.

Ne Win's planned visit to the United States was interpreted here as a cautious but courageous effort to move out of Peking's orbit.

Visit To India

He paid a visit to Communist China last July, but balanced it with a trip to the Soviet Union in September. In another exercise in strict neutrality, he visited both India and Pakistan last month.

Ne Win's trip here is expected to be largely ceremonial, but the President probably will seek out his views on China and Viet Nam. No resumption of U.S. aid is in prospect.

The invitation to Ne Win has been outstanding since the late President John E. Kennedy offered it shortly after the general came to power in 1962.

But Ne Win, who visited the United States in 1956, balked, largely out of fear of Peking's reaction, but also because of his resentment of the CIA.

Braces U.S. Envoy

At one point during his battles with the Chinese Nationalists Ne Win braced U.S. Ambassador William J. Sebald and accused the United States of intervening in Burmese affairs.

Sebald, acting on assurances from Washington, denied it emphatically, but later learned that the CIA had, in fact, been involved without his knowledge.